

503/502 BC

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ATHENS

CLEISTHENIC CYCLE

Cleisthenes introduced his Calendar
(Revised an existing). The Civil year was supposed

to begin as nearly as possible to the 1st NEW moon after
the SUMMER SOLSTICE; and the difference between the
lunar twelvemonth and the solar revolution was
provided for by a cycle of 8 yrs., in the 1st; 3rd; and 6th,
of which additional months were intercalated. The
ordinary year consisted of 354, the intercalated of 384 days.
Cleisthenes, taking 360 as the number of days in his

official yr. was also obliged to intercalate, but not so often. He adopted a cycle of 5 yrs and once each cycle an intercalary month of 30 days was introduced. But this month was NOT always inserted in the same yr. of the cycle. It was here that Cleisthenes brought his quin-quennial into line with the octennial system. The extraordinary official month was intercalated in the first year of the official cycle that coincided with an intercalary year of the civil cycle. The new institution of Cleisthenes began to work in 503/02 BC - the 1st year of an octennial cycle. The 1st Cleisthenean year began on the 1st of Hecatombaeon, the 1st month of the civil Cal. It would not begin on that day again till 40 yrs hence